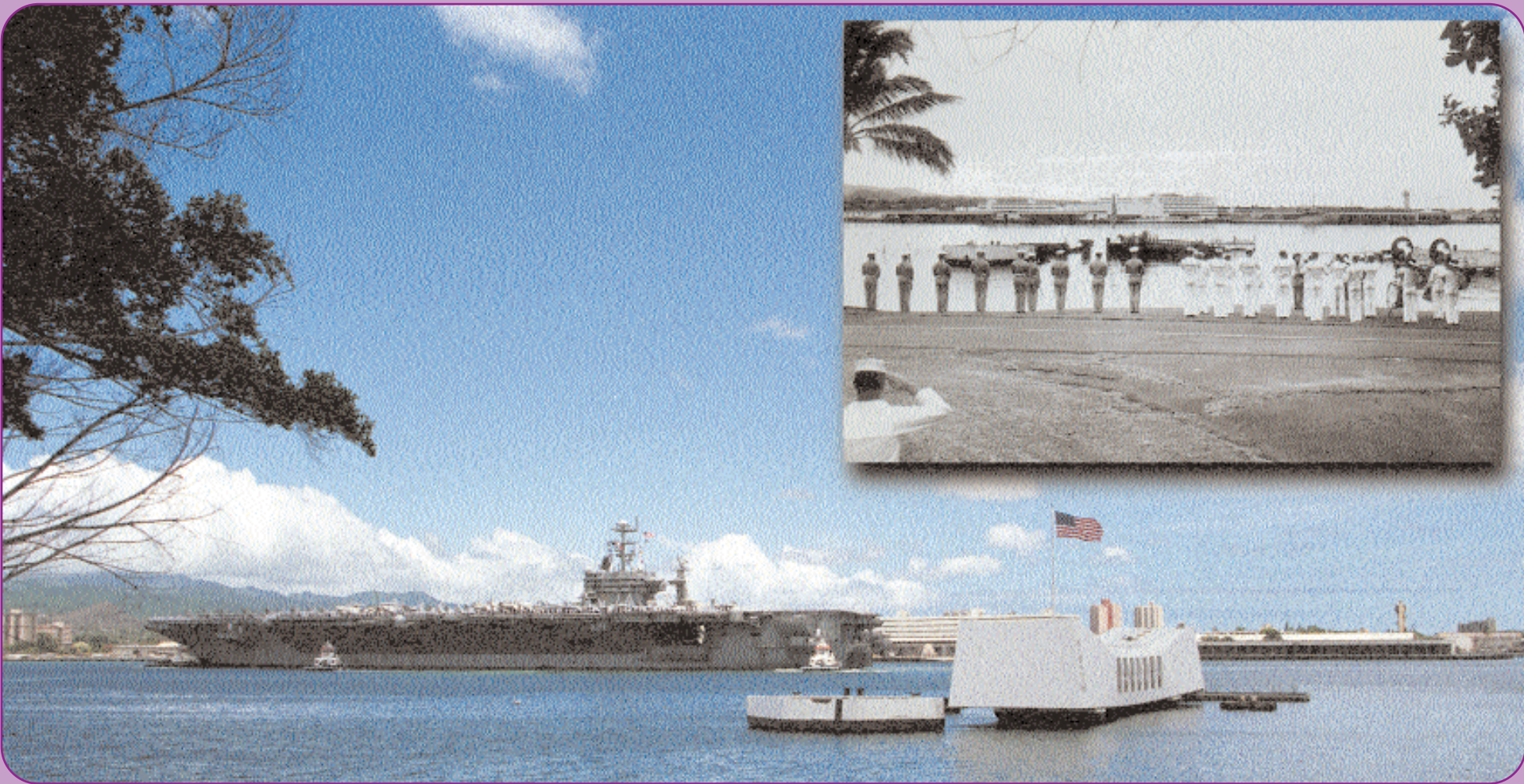


# LIBERTY CALL

## Navy Club Memorial...dedicated to victims of Pearl Harbor



At a vantage point near the Navy Club Memorial on Ford Island, USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier passes the Arizona Memorial. The Navy Club Memorial was the first memorial dedicated to the victims of the attack on Pearl Harbor. In the smaller photo, a Navy band and Pearl Harbor Sailors stand at attention at the dedication ceremony of the Navy Club Memorial on Dec. 7, 1955. At that time, only a floating platform marked the resting place of the USS Arizona.

Allen Meyer and wife Chris visit the Navy Club Memorial on Ford Island. Meyer's late father, Alton Meyer, was a member of the local branch of the Navy Club of the U.S.A. and it was through his efforts that the memorial was commissioned and later dedicated at a special ceremony on Dec. 7, 1955. In the smaller photo, the 26-ton memorial is shown just before it was placed on its present site on Ford Island overlooking the Arizona Memorial. Alton Meyer (on right) was chairman of the Pearl Harbor Memorial Commission which commissioned the memorial. The bronze plaque on the memorial is inscribed, "in reverent recognition of divine guidance and to the eternal memory of those who gave their last full measure of devotion to their country, this monument is dedicated humbly to their sacrifice in defending our freedom."



All black and white photos provided by Allen Meyer

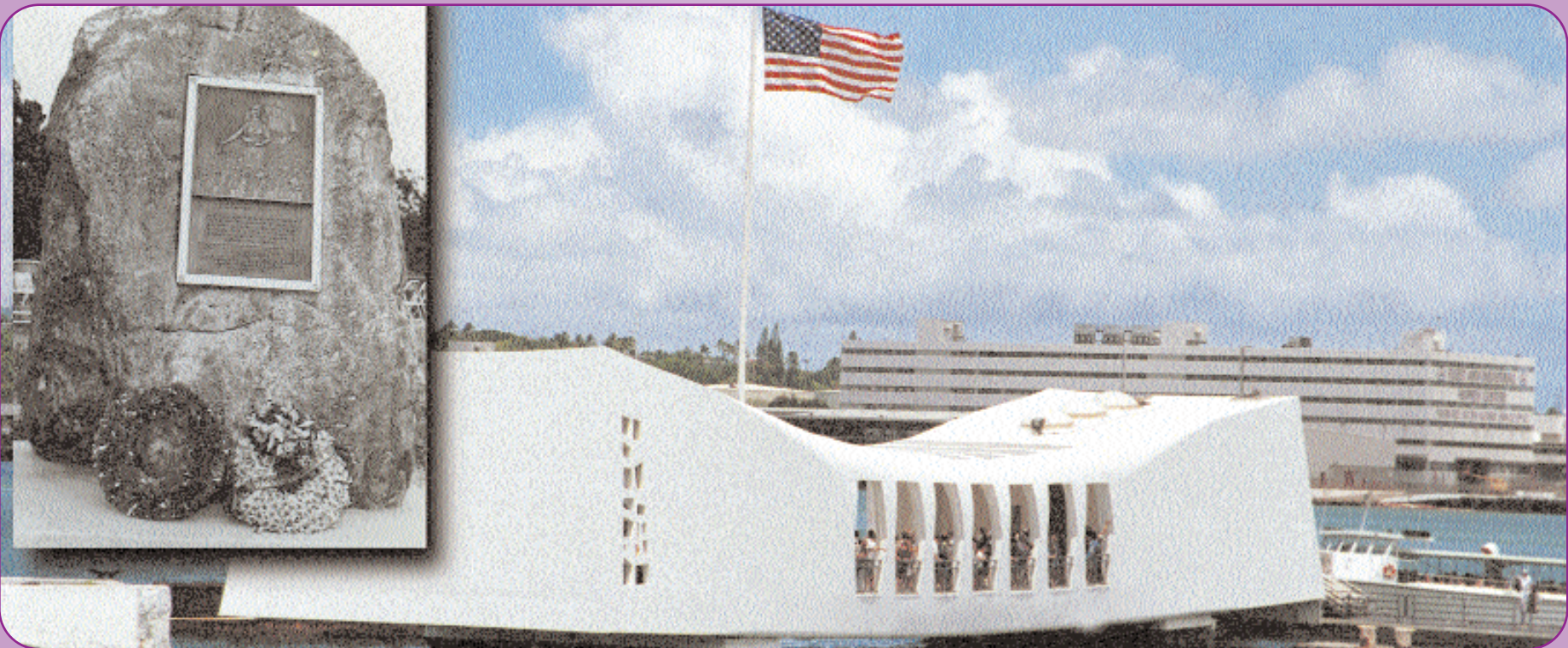
Allen Meyer ran his fingers over the rough surface of the huge 10-foot high, 26-ton Hawaiian bluestone (a rock of volcanic origin) boulder - the first memorial dedicated to those who lost their lives during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Situated on a grassy bank on Ford Island at a vantage point which overlooks the Arizona Memorial, the memorial is known to few. But it holds special meaning for Meyer - for it was through the efforts of his father, Alton G. Meyer, that the memorial was commissioned and later dedicated at a special ceremony on Dec. 7, 1955. Meyer's trip to Hawaii - with an opportunity for a firsthand look at the memorial - was the realization of a dream for the Missouri resident. His father, a former Pearl Harbor officer who served in the Navy as a judge advocate general, was killed in an automobile accident when his son

Allen was only three. Although he never knew his father, Meyer's mother shared memories with her son. Some of those memories included a scrapbook of pictures and articles about the Navy Club Memorial on Ford Island. When the opportunity to plan a trip to Hawaii finally came, Meyer set aside extra time to tour the sites memorializing the Pearl Harbor attack. He and his wife Chris visited the Battleship Missouri and the Arizona Memorial. Describing his visit to the Arizona Memorial as a very emotional experience, Meyer related, "It was a very moving experience to stand over the Arizona where so many men are still entombed. While standing on the Arizona, it was even more moving to see the memorial on Ford Island that my father had commissioned." It was on the 14th anniversary of the tragic Japanese attack on Pearl

Harbor when representatives of the Navy Club of the U.S.A. (NCUSA), a naval veterans organization, met on Ford Island to "remember Pearl Harbor" and dedicate the monument. The dedication culminated more than four years' of effort by the Pearl Harbor Memorial Commission. Dignitaries, high-ranking military officials, members of the Navy band and Sailors were in attendance for the dedication. At the ceremony, they also stood at attention and saluted the Arizona - although at that time only a floating platform rested above the remains of the great ship. Alton Meyer, who was then Pearl Harbor Memorial Commission Chairman, offered words of thanks and hope at the dedication in December 1955, a message that rings just as true today. "We are here to place a memorial to the memory

of our men who died as a result of that attack upon this area 14 years ago," he said. "What purpose can such a memorial serve? It can only serve to remind us of the men who gave up their lives in the first hour of World War II. These men fought back nobly and died heroically. The lessons of Pearl Harbor are obvious," he continued. "They indelibly stamp the necessity for preparedness and serve as a clear reminder that vigilance must be maintained," he said. He concluded, "It is with great pride that the Navy Club Pearl Harbor Memorial Commission presents to the Navy Club of the U.S.A., this memorial monument erected in memory of those who have so gallantly given their lives in defense of democracy and freedom." The national commandant of NCUSA in turn presented the memorial to the commandant of the

14th Naval District. And now in the year 2000, Allen Meyer stood near the Navy Club Memorial and gazed across the water as the USS Abraham Lincoln, an aircraft carrier arriving to take part in RIMPAC exercises, glided past the Arizona Memorial. It was a glimpse into the past with a reminder of the present. "This trip will always be an experience of a lifetime," Meyer said. "I will always be eternally grateful to the Navy and all the men and women who serve our country." But the bronze plaque mounted on the Navy Club Memorial probably says it best. It is inscribed "in reverent recognition of divine guidance and to the eternal memory of those who gave their last full measure of devotion to their country, this monument is dedicated humbly to their sacrifice in defending our freedom."



Story and color photos by Karen S. Spangler

The Arizona Memorial, a tribute to those who lie entombed in the great ship beneath it, is a constant reminder of the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. The Navy Club Memorial (inset photo) was the first memorial dedicated to the victims of the Pearl Harbor attack. It is shown here shortly after its dedication on Dec. 7, 1955.